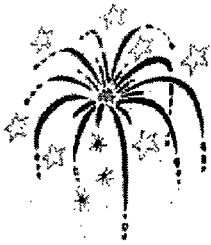


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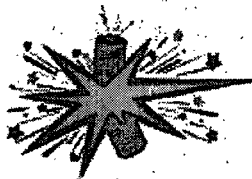
## Fireworks in Elkton



Fireworks were a big business in Elkton at one time. During World War II, Triumph Industries located in Elkton changed from production of firecrackers to production of a variety of explosives used in warfare from detonators to land mines. Their success at quickly filling orders, led to several federal contracts for anti-aircraft shells for Navy warships. The U.S. government fearing Triumph would not keep a constant supply, took over the company in 1942. Eventually, 11,500 workers (80% women) were working in this munitions factory. This migration of workers caused Elkton's population to triple in less than 3 years! Explosives, however, are not without risk. There were several small accidents, but the worst accident of all was in 1943. The explosion killed 15 people and injured over 100. Additionally, women working with the dangerous chemicals watched their hair turn an awful shade of red and their skin turn yellow.

The Bello family of Elkton owned the Mid-State Fireworks Company. Bello Sr. opened the fireworks business in 1937. After serious injuries occurred due to explosions, the Bello family closed down Mid-State Fireworks Company.

Today there are still Fireworks/Explosives factories located in the Elkton area. New Jersey Fireworks is located on the outskirts of Elkton and has been in business for 55 years. Elkton Sparkler Company and Patriotic Fireworks are located in North East Maryland, one of Elkton's neighboring towns.



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